

Kathmandu - The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has launched an exciting short film competition titled “You Are No Exception” to promote awareness and prevention of HIV/AIDS in Nepal.

This competition provides eight promising Nepali filmmakers the opportunity to develop 5-7 minute films to educate audiences about HIV/AIDS, disseminate prevention messages, and stimulate greater understanding of individual risk.

Each filmmaker will have the opportunity to work with an established professional actor who will play a key part in these short films. This film competition is a key component of a broader communication campaign which aims to address social taboos and myths associated with the purchase and use of condoms; to increase perceived risk of contracting HIV/AIDS; and to promote the use of condoms.

A series of activities are scheduled around these short films, including:

- Screening in over 150 cinema theatres covering 70% of the country for a month
- National tour by the crew and celebrity of each film
- Special screenings in 22 districts along the East-West highway
- Awards ceremony to be aired live on television

These films will be produced in Nepali as well as regional languages such as Maithili, Dutteli, Achhami and will highlight specific stories relevant to these language groups.

The campaign, a major initiative of USAID’s Nepal Social Marketing and Franchise project (N-MARC), also features other activities including a celebrity advocacy campaign and partnering with the Hotel Association of Nepal to make condoms easily available to their clients.

About USAID’s Nepal Social Marketing and Franchising Project (N-MARC)

Launched in July 2006, the goal of N-MARC, USAID’s Private Sector Program in Nepal under the leadership of the Academy for Educational Development (AED), is to undertake prevention campaigns that challenge stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS as well as to empower people to protect themselves from this deadly infection. N-MARC strives to achieve this by increasing the availability and sustained use of family planning (FP), maternal and child health (MCH), and HIV/Sexually Transmitted Infection prevention products and services in Nepal.